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SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: JULY 23, 2009

Summary: All newspapers on Thursday ran as their lead story reports that the Supreme Court "took an unprecedented step in the country's judicial history by inviting former military ruler (Musharraf) to defend his extra constitutional actions in the court." Reports and photographs on Ambassador Holbrooke's engagements in Islamabad and his meeting with Pakistan government officials flashed on the front page. Newspapers highlighted his comments that "(former) President Musharraf is history and the U.S. would not rescue him." Also front-paged were reports that "Prime Minister Gilani demanded the U.S. to stop the drone attacks and share real time, credible and actionable intelligence with Pakistan." Reports that "28 militants were killed in the ongoing military operation in Swat, Buner and Dir Lower" also figured prominently. Also highlighted was the provision of "\$65 million on immediate basis" by the U.S. for the IDPs.

Local political developments and issues dominated editorial themes in most major dailies. End Summary.

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News Stories  
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"SC Calls Musharraf To Defend November 3 Actions" "Dawn" (07/23)

"The Supreme Court took an unprecedented step in the country's judicial history on Wednesday by inviting a former military ruler (Gen. (Retd) Pervez Musharraf) to defend his extra-constitutional actions in the court."

"U.S. Won't Rescue Musharraf, Says Holbrooke" "The News" (07/23)

"U.S. special envoy for Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke said on Wednesday Pervez Musharraf was now history and that the U.S. would not defend him. Talking to the media in Islamabad, he termed Musharraf's case Pakistan's internal issue, adding the U.S. respects the country's judiciary."

"PM Seeks Technology, Intelligence From U.S." "Dawn" (07/23)

"'Drone attacks in FATA have proved counter-productive and seriously impeded Pakistan's efforts towards rooting out militancy and terrorism,' Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani told Richard Holbrooke, the U.S. Special Envoy for Pakistan and Afghanistan, on Wednesday. He asked the United States to share real-time, credible and actionable intelligence with Pakistan and provide it technology to counter militants."

"28 Militants Killed in Operation Rah-e-Rast" "The News" (07/23)

"Twenty-eight militants were killed and several houses were razed during the ongoing military operation Rah-e-Rast in Swat Valley, Buner and Dir Lower on Wednesday."

"U.S. Advances \$65 Million For IDPs" "The News" (07/23)

"The Obama Administration on Wednesday informed Pakistan that out of total U.S. pledged assistance of \$165 million for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) of Swat and Buner, Washington would provide \$65 million on immediate basis while remaining \$100 million would be released within the next few weeks, U.S. Assistance Secretary for International Refugees, Eric Schwartz told the 'The News, in Islamabad."

"U.S. To Help But Basically Pakistan Is On Its Own" "The News" (07/23)

"The U.S. point man on Pakistan and Afghanistan, Richard Holbrooke, has said while the U.S. is trying its best to financially help out Pakistan but Pakistan needs to overcome its economic miseries compounded by the war on terror and the IDP crisis, while addressing a press conference in Islamabad on Wednesday along with Minister of State for Economic Affairs Ms. Hina Rabbani Khar."

"U.S. Asks Pakistan: Stop Begging, Rely On Own Resources: F.P. Report" (07/23)

"U.S. Special Envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke has asked Pakistan to rely on its own resources to overcome its financial difficulties faced by the South-Asian nation. Addressing a joint press conference with Minister for State on Finance Hina Rabbani Khar in Islamabad on Wednesday, visiting U.S. envoy regretted that the international community did not offered 'satisfactory cooperation' to Pakistan for overcoming its financial hardships. However, Holbrooke assured that the U.S. would continue its support for the country."

"Gilani Seeks Help From U.S. And Friendly States" "Business Recorder" (07/23)

"Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani has called upon the U.S. and other friendly countries to come forward in a big way to help Pakistan in the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase as the dislocated persons have started moving back to their homes in the cleared areas of Malakand division. Talking to Richard Holbrooke in Islamabad on Wednesday, Gilani urged the U.S. administration to expedite the process of early passage of Kerry Lugar and ROZ bills from the U.S. Congress."

"World Owes To Pakistan, Says Zardari" "The News" (07/23)

"President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday said Pakistan needed a Marshal Plan to overcome its economic problems compounded by the fight against militancy and urged the international community to come forward to help Pakistan. The President made these remarks during the meeting with U.S. Special Envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke, who called on him, in Islamabad on Wednesday evening at the Presidency."

"Holbrooke Calls On Kayani, Pasha" "Daily Times" (07/23)

"U.S. Special Envoy to Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke on Wednesday called on Chief of Army Staff General Ashfaq Kayani at the General Headquarters and discussed various defence matters with him. Sources said General Kayani briefed the U.S. official about the recent success against the Taliban in Swat and the neighboring districts during the two-month-long operation."

"Pakistan Raises Concern Over U.S. Afghan Offensive" "The News" (07/23)

"Pakistan raised concern on Wednesday with the visiting U.S. Envoy Richard Holbrooke over a U.S.-led offensive in neighboring southern Afghanistan that Islamabad fears could send Taliban fighters across the border could destabilize Balochistan, Foreign Office spokesman Abdul Basit said."

"Former IB Chief Says U.S. Created Taliban" "The Post" (07/23)

"Former Chief of Intelligence Bureau (IB) Brig. (Retd) Imtiaz Ahmad has said that the United States created Taliban in order to occupy the Asian region. 'Hamid Karzai was the trogon horse of the Unites States and he would not have worked long if had he been brought in the beginning,' he told BBC during an interview in Islamabad on Wednesday after remaining silent for 19 years since his retirement."

"Qureshi, Clinton Take Up Op Today" "The Post" (07/23)

"Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi would hold an important meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton today (Thursday) in Thailand on the sidelines of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). Talking to a private TV channel, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said that the meeting would discuss bilateral relations between the two countries, especially in context with operation against militants."

"Terrorist Training Centre Bombed In S. Waziristan" "Dawn" (07/23)

"Ten militants were killed when military planes bombed suspected positions of militants in South Waziristan on Wednesday. AFP quoted an official as saying that the planes bombed two places in the Sarwakai area of South Waziristan. Both places were destroyed and a The militants killed in the strikes belonged to Mehsud's group, he said."

"Jirga For Door-To-Door Search In Buner To Fret Out Militants"  
"Dawn" (07/23)

"A Jirga has unanimously resolved that the ongoing military operation in the region must be made effective and sustainable by launching door-to-door search in every village to clear the area of militants."

"Soldier Killed, 5 Injured In Miramshah" "Dawn" (07/23)

"One soldier was killed and five other sustained injuries when a mortar shell hit their base camp in Miramshah town of North Waziristan tribal region on Wednesday, official said."

"Two Militants Held, Several Hideouts Destroyed In Bajaur" "The News" (07/23)

"Security forces arrested two militants and dismantled several hideouts during search operation in Charmang area of the troubled Bajaur Agency on Wednesday."

"New Taliban Group Formed In Waziristan" "The Nation" (07/23)

"Three groups of Taliban in South Waziristan Agency on Wednesday selected Ikhlas Khan alias Waziristan Baba as the new Ameer of Abdullah Mehsud group. Talking to a private TV channel, Ikhlas Khan said that Baitullah Mehsud and other groups would not be allowed to indulge in cruel activities against innocent people."

"16 Arrested In Mohmand Agency" "The News" (07/23)

"The political administration arrested 16 tribesmen and seized their seven vehicles for their failure to hand over wanted persons to the government in Halimzai tehsil. Separately, the Jirga of Safi subdivision handed over 31 suspected persons to administration."

"Four Bodies Recovered In Tank" "The News" (07/23)

"Four bullet-riddled bodies, reported to be of Mehsud tribesmen, were recovered from Pather area, five kilometers away from Tank on Wednesday."

"Militant's Body Recovered, 8 Houses Razed" "The News" (07/23)

"A bullet-riddled body of a militant commander Haider Ali was recovered while the security forces demolished eight houses of the militants and a Madarassa during search operations in different areas of Mingora district on Wednesday."

"Malakand Educational Institutes To Open On August 1, "The Post"  
(07/23)

"Provincial Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Barrister Arshad Abdullah have said all the educational institutions of the Malakand division would reopen on August 1. Talking to television network, he said normalcy is fast returning to Buner and 85 percent of the displaced people have returned back to their homes."

"80 Government Officials Held For Alleged Taliban Links" "The News"  
(07/23)

"Eighty government officials of lower and higher ranks have been taken into custody on the suspicion of supporting extremists financially and in many other ways, a private TV channel reported on Wednesday."

"India-U.S. Ties Not To Affect Pakistan, Says Qureshi" "Dawn"  
(07/23)

"The Minister told The Associated Press on the sidelines of the annual ASEAN Regional Forum in Thailand (Phuket) that Pakistan was not concerned about closer ties between Washington and Delhi. 'We have a very independent relationship with the United States and if India gets closer to the United States it will not affect us because we have been allies for 60 years.'"

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Editorials/Op-eds  
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"Rehman Malik And Drone Attacks," an editorial in the second-largest, center-right nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (07/23)

"Interior Minister Rehman Malik has said that America, the champion of democracy should heed the voices raised in our assemblies and stop attacks on Pakistan.... These drone attacks would not stop by mere statement and requests.... The government should gun down any plane or helicopter violating Pakistan airspace. This is the way to stop drone attacks."

"The Awam And Donkeys," an op-ed by Zafar Hilaly in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (07/23)

"When it comes to our Awam, that repository of Pakistani wisdom, America can do no right. If America is generous with her assistance it is because our support is indispensable; if America is forthcoming with equipment and weaponry it is only to better enable Pakistan to fight America's war; if America engages with Pakistan intensively it is merely to pressurize Pakistan to bow to Washington's demands; if America extends assurances of friendship it is because Americans are shameless liars; if Washington offers intelligence sharing it is a mere ruse to enable the CIA to penetrate Pakistan's intelligence agencies; if the Americans install a command and control system for the safety of our nuclear assets it is a tactic to undermine Pakistan's nuclear program and eventually seize our nuclear weapons.... To shun the help of the most powerful nation in the world today; and one that is able, willing and eager to help (albeit for her own reasons) merely because the Awam prefer to live in a fantasy world of illusion and cannot bear reality would be unwise. Actually, Pakistan has no choice."

"The RAW Dossier," an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (07/23)

"If there are rogue elements within RAW who are acting independently, they must be taken to task forthwith. Pakistan also needs to put its own intelligence agencies under the microscope and determine whether a similar cull is needed here. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton urged India the other day to help Pakistan in the fight against terrorism, for the common good of both countries. This is advice worth heeding because the two neighbors are now at a crossroads and need to choose a course that will relegate past follies to the realm of history. It is not the intelligence agencies that have paid the price for our mutual antagonism. It is the poor people of the subcontinent who have suffered at the hands

of a money-guzzling war machine."

"Naove Remarks," an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (07/23)

"Indo-Pakistan joint statement issued at Sharm El-Shaikh in which New Delhi had agreed to de-link the issue of terrorism from the composite dialogue process.... It is a pity that it has now backed down on the pledge to resume the dialogue. Rather than assuming a threatening posture in asserting itself as a regional hegemon, India must come to the negotiating table to meet the demands of good sense and peace in the Subcontinent."

"India's Half-Step To Talks," an op-ed by Asif Ezdi in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (07/23)

"Despite the formal de-linking of terrorism from the dialogue, it is clear that India will maintain an effective connection between the two.... Manmohan Singh is keen to resume the dialogue because, whatever the importance of curbing terrorism following the trauma of Mumbai, India's broader objectives towards Pakistan and in the region cannot be realized without holding talks.... Second, India would like that Pakistan acknowledge the role assigned to it in Afghanistan under Obama's Af-Pak policy. Obama has proposed a contact group on Afghanistan and Pakistan, with India as an important member. This arrangement, which would amount to recognition of India's hegemonic role in the region, has not yet been formalized because of Pakistan-India differences. India hopes that with a resumption of the bilateral dialogue with Pakistan, Pakistan would be more accommodating."

"Israeli Activities And Arab League's Resolve," an editorial in liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (07/23)

"The Arab League should strive to counter Israel's attempts to change the identity of occupied Jerusalem. The Muslim brotherhood must help the Arab League in these efforts."

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)  
Patterson